

Oakengates Urban District Council



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# INTERIM REPORT

on the

Health and Sanitary

Circumstances

of the

Oakengates Urban District

for the year 1946



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# Oakengates Urban District Council



Again the Ministry of Health has found it expedient to retain the form of Annual Report as submitted from the beginning of the War, and, this being so, an interim survey of the health and sanitary circumstances of your area is given herein.

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Under Section F it will be seen that the number and variety of cases of infectious diseases notified was limited. Measles and Whooping Cough accounted for a high percentage of these, but it was not a year of epidemic conditions for these infections of childhood. For still another year no cases of Diphtheria occurred.

## TUBERCULOSIS.

Vital statistics show that the Infant Birth Rate was slightly above that of England and Wales, while the deaths among these was higher than that generally prevailing. The Death Rate for all classes was above that of the Country, but this in slight degree only.

The Tuberculosis Register shows a considerable increase over the total for 1945, but the death rate from this disease was low — one case of respiratory infection dying.

During the twelve months the Council has pushed forward in the effort to relieve housing difficulties and to improve water services and general sanitation. At the same time it has been found possible to actively co-operate with neighbouring Authorities in improving such services as Ambulance and Mortuary Accommodation.

At this occasion the Medical Officer of Health takes the opportunity of thanking your Sanitary Inspector and his staff for loyalty and ever-ready co-operation in the work of the Department, and the Council for their encouragement and courtesy.

# OAKENGATES URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

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*Chairman :* COUN. F. JONES, J.P.

*Deputy Chairman :* COUN. J. N. WORRALL.

*Members :*

M. CLAY.	MRS. L. J. MART.
W. N. CORFIELD.	W. J. MOSS.
REV. J. A. P. DANIELS.	L. NOCK.
MRS. F. M. DAWES.	J. PICKERING.
W. FOX.	J. HAYWARD.
T. HAYWARD.	

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## **Staff of the Public Health Department.**

*Medical Officer of Health :*

DR. W. A. M. STEWART, M.B., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., Barrister at Law.

*Sanitary Inspector and Cleansing Superintendent :*

A. H. JOHNSTONE, M.S.L.A., C.R.S.I.

Certificate, Royal Sanitary Institute. (1) Meat and Food  
Inspection ; (2) Smoke. Inspector.

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*Clerical Assistants :*

L. PHILLIPS and Miss S. JONES.



## SECTION A.

### Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area (in acres)	..	..	..	..	..	2,329
Register General's Estimate of resident population	..					10,660
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1946) according to						
Rate Books	..	..	..	..	..	3,103
Rateable value	..	..	..	..	..	£36,015
Sum represented by one penny rate	..	..	..			£135
Persons per acre (calculated on population)	..	..				4.5

### Population and Social Conditions.

The official returns show a slight increase in population during the current year. This, despite the scarcity of houses and limited accommodation, augurs that, were the houses available this increase would be more marked.

Little changes have been made in the shopping facilities available, and in these unusual times this housewives' burden is felt acutely ; this the more so as the cessation of the British Restaurant necessitates the provision of a mid-day meal in a large number of houses.

The Town would appear to be served by more adequate transport facilities ; these are well patronised, carrying passengers to neighbouring towns and Wolverhampton.

The populace are acutely conscious of their civic position and much interest is centred in the work of the Local Authority.

Amenities could be improved by the provision of a good public park and open spaces, together with recreational facilities, and the need for public baths and perhaps a civic centre is noticed.

Future developments will no doubt preserve amenities by town planning, giving that balanced development so necessary for the siting of houses, open spaces and industry.

### Extracts from Vital Statistics.

#### LIVE BIRTHS.

			<i>Males.</i>	<i>Females.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Legitimate	..	..	106	91	197
Illegitimate	..	..	7	4	11
Totals	..		113	95	208

Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated population	..	..	19.5
Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated population (England and Wales)	..	..	19.1

## STILL BIRTHS.

			<i>Males.</i>	<i>Females.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Legitimate	..	..	1	—	1
Illegitimate	..	..	1	—	1
Totals	..		2	—	2

Rate per 1,000 total (Live and Still) Births .. .. 9.5

## DEATHS.

			<i>Males.</i>	<i>Females.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Total Number of Deaths	..		72	69	141
Death Rate per 1,000 of estimated population	..	..			13.2
Death Rate per 1,000 of estimated population (England and Wales)	..	..	..	..	11.5

## INFANTILE MORTALITY.

All Infants, per 1,000 live births	..	..	..	..	62.5
All Infants, per 1,000 live births (England and Wales)					43.0
Legitimate Infants, per 1,000 live legitimate births	..				66
Illegitimate Infants, per 1,000 live illegitimate births	..				—

Total number of Infant Deaths :—					<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
Legitimate	..	..	..	..	5	8
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	—	—
Total	..	..	..	..	5	8

Deaths from : Cancer (all ages)	..	..	..	..	20
Measles (all ages)	..	..	..	..	—
Whooping Cough (all ages)			..	..	—
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)			..	..	2

## MATERNITY MORTALITY.

Under this heading there were no deaths.

## CHIEF CAUSES OF DEATH.

Tuberculosis (all forms)	..	..	..	..	..	1
Cancer	..	..	..	..	..	20
Intra Cranial Vascular Lesions	..	..	..	..	..	24
Heart Disease and Circulatory Disturbances	..	..				48
Respiratory Diseases	..	..	..	..	..	8
Nephritis	..	..	..	..	..	6
Premature Births and Congenital Malformations					..	8
Violence	..	..	..	..	..	4
Diabetes	..	..	..	..	..	1
Abdominal Disease	..	..	..	..	..	7
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	..	..	..	..	..	2
Influenza	..	..	..	..	..	5

## **SECTION B.**

### **General Provision for Health Services in District.**

#### **AMBULANCE.**

As had been forecast in the annual report for 1945, a joint ambulance scheme was inaugurated in May of this year. This is the East Shropshire (Local Authorities) Joint Ambulance, whose constituent members are Oakengates, Dawley Urban and Wellington Rural District Councils.

Two fully equipped ambulances formed the nucleus of the service, together with a further vehicle capable of limited use within the district.

The service is based on the N.F.S. Depot at Donnington and serviced by one whole time and a part time driver, together with two attendants, taking a rota of duty so that there is available throughout the 24 hours a fully equipped ambulance with driver and attendant. The administrative work is directed by Mr. Johnstone, your Sanitary Inspector. Meetings of the Joint Committee are held at frequent intervals in the Council Chambers at Oakengates.

The difficulties experienced in this service have been pleasantly overcome and the transition has been of the smoothest.

From the medical practitioners' and public point of view this service has given the maximum efficiency and is greatly appreciated by all concerned. The Salop County Council have shown keen interest and it is anticipated that this centre will be an important factor in the future County Council Ambulance scheme under the proposed National Health Service Act.

#### **MORTUARY.**

Preliminary discussions have taken place between Wellington Rural Council, Dawley Urban Council and your Authority with a view to establishing a Joint Mortuary for the area, sited at the Ambulance Station. Nothing material has resulted, yet with mutual co-operation of interested parties there is no reason why provision of this sorely needed facility should not be established.

## **SECTION C.**

### **Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.**

#### **HOUSE REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.**

The direction of the cleansing department is under the control of the Sanitary Inspector. This involves a great amount of work in a district of this nature, where numbers of miners



obtain coal freely from the collieries. Despite fuel rationing, the amount of ashes has increased, due to the poor quality of coal supplied to the inhabitants.

Shortage of man power of the desired type, together with poor mechanical condition of the vehicles, has arrested any improvement in this service. Nevertheless, improvement has taken place and when the vehicles which the Council have on order are delivered, collection of refuse should be facilitated.

#### DISPOSAL.

Two tips are in use in the area for convenience of disposal ; controlled methods are being increasingly used with beneficial results.

#### NIGHT SOIL.

Complaints have not been as frequent. During the year the Council placed an order for a new mechanical cesspool and pail-emptying machine. When delivered the work will be on a more hygienic basis and should obviate complaints. Until the conservancy system is abolished, this should provide the best method of disposal.

#### SALVAGE.

The adoption of collection of salvage in trailers behind the refuse vehicles has fully justified itself, not only by a greater amount being collected but by a more frequent and economical method.

#### VERMIN INFESTATION.

An attack was made on the rat population of all sewers in the district. This operation was directed by the Sanitary Inspector on the lines prescribed by the Ministry of Food. Pre-baiting by sausage rusk was carried out at all sewer man holes in the area. Where evidence of rats was indicated by takes of bait a poisoning campaign was undertaken on the third day, using the poison Zinc Phosphide. Observation of the poisoned bait would indicate a satisfactory kill of rats in the sewers. A follow up treatment was given, this time the bait used was bread and the poison Arsenious Oxide.

Simultaneously action was carried out above ground by a Rodent Operator of the County Council. Systematic treatment on these lines are important. Difficulties of providing man power was surmounted by the use of German P.O.W. labour.

The County Council are the authority responsible under the Acts and Orders for rodent control. It is hoped that after overcoming their difficulties in manpower, increased attention will be directed to this work.



Several houses have been treated for bugs and other vermin. Preparations are increasingly easier to obtain, with consequent better control of infestation which have to be dealt with, but in this connection careful watch should be exercised when transfers of tenants are made to new houses, and steps taken to avoid the occurrence of re-infesting new properties.

#### WATER SUPPLIES.

The water supply to the district has been well maintained during the year with the two sets of well and high lift pumps installed a number of years ago. The diesel engine driving the No. 1 Pumping Set has been scrapped and in its place a 100 h.p. Electric Motor installed, which has increased the efficiency of the plant and has somewhat improved the water output.

To meet the ever increased demand for water a new borehole is now being constructed near the present Pumping Station. New rising and supply mains have been laid and a new complete electrically driven pumping unit will be installed, probably by next year. This, with the present pumping plant, will be capable of delivering about 750,000 gallons of water per day.

The large storage reservoir has been repaired at Redhill and has been in commission for some time. This, with the auxiliary steel tank, gives a storage capacity of about 600,000 gallons.

The new electrically driven pumping unit installed near the Greyhound Inn, pumping a supply of water to the new storage tank at Ketley Bank is giving abundant and satisfactory supply to the residents of Ketley Bank.

The cast iron water main at Gower Street, St. George's, has been extended. A number of new connections have been made and additional services laid to new houses, including two new housing sites. This will serve about 120 houses.

Samples of the local supply in the raw state are taken at frequent intervals and submitted for analysis, with uniformly satisfactory results.

Apart from extensions to new housing estates, no minor connections have been made and the families dependent on standpipes remain unaltered.

The District centres an area where there are many individual suppliers and it has been felt for long that some form of amalgamation of these suppliers would result in not only efficiency but in additional economy. With this end in view, a meeting of all Authorities in East Shropshire was held in Midsummer and it was decided there to act on the advice of a Consultant Engineer acting in co-operation with local technicians. The preliminaries of this work have been advancing and early in 1947 it is expected that these officers will report when the Council will know their obligations and commitments.

## SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE.

The Council have now under consideration the installing of a new Sewage Disposal Works to replace the obsolete system. This will comprise sedimentation, storm water and humus tanks and bacteria beds. It is hoped that the Engineer will give an early report to allow further steps to be taken to start on this work.

The present sewerage system is now working at full capacity, but during the course of the year an increase of infiltration of sub-soil water has presented difficulties. To guard against this the Council are now considering a report from their Consulting Engineer on proposed new sewers and provision of a sewerage system to deal with storm water. It is hoped that the system made will be not only preventive but perfect.

Many conversions of privies to the water carriage system have been carried out during the year, but there are still many to be dealt with. The full scope of this work will not be able to be undertaken until a full system of farms is available to carry the flow and an adequate means of disposal at the end.

## SECTION D.

### Housing.

The Sanitary Inspector reports :—

#### HOUSING, PERMANENT.

This service of the authority is still the one demanding first attention. During the course of the year whilst plans and expansions were envisaged and prepared, expectations did not materialise in relation to effort. Nevertheless, some progress was made in the building of permanent houses on the sites at Furnace Lane and Wrockwardine Wood. By the end of the year it was anticipated that early in 1947, some few houses would be completed ready for occupation. On completion of these two sites — 50 at Furnace Lane and 12 at Wrockwardine Wood — the first step in the provision of new houses will be undertaken.

#### PLANS.

Preparation is in progress to have 70 houses built and it is expected that they will be sited at Church Parade, Wombridge.

#### TEMPORARY HOUSES.

The allocation of Tarran houses for the site at Moss Road, near St. George's, was 48, which were delivered, erected and in occupation by the end of the year.



These houses are pleasantly situated and have met the demands of the most difficult cases. The homes lend themselves to easy running, with labour-saving equipment of the highest order. With careful use they should give satisfactory accommodation for a number of years.

The Council have no further plans for this type of dwelling.

#### PRIVATE ENTERPRISE.

Under this heading progress has been limited, due to the demands on labour for the Local Authorities' projects. Nevertheless, 42 houses were completed by the end of the year, which shows considerable local effort.

#### HUTMENTS AND ITINERANT DWELLINGS.

Up to year-end, hutment dwellings presented no problem to the authority. In the case of two caravan dwellers, recourse to legal proceedings were successful, and resulted in fines of £5 and costs in both cases with an order for removal from the district. From that date no difficulties have been experienced.

The Council are well aware of the adverse living accommodation of many of the inhabitants and the relief of which they had planned for prior to the war. With the additional burden of lack or neglect of maintenance of any standard due, in the main, to material and manpower shortage, housing conditions generally have continued to degenerate.

Coupled with these factors has been the cessation of the use of some houses and the marriage of the younger citizens who, by force of circumstance, are forced to continue to live with parents and in-laws. The natural result has been a marked degree of overcrowding to the detriment of their health.

#### HOUSING DEPARTMENT.

The Council have a well established housing department embracing all branches for the efficient maintenance of their estates. The allocation of new houses is carried out by scrupulous impartiality with the aid of a points system. The merit of the case is the deciding factor.

During the year under review the Housing Managership came under the control of Mr. Hamel. He replaced Mr. Joseph Lee, under whose capable direction the department was raised to a high standard, not only in material matters but in the engendering of personal confidence of the people, with the development of a considerable degree of social welfare amongst the tenants.

## SECTION E.

### INSPECTION OF MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

Meat is allocated to the district from Shrewsbury Abattoir. Examination of this meat is carried out there, a check on this inspection is kept in this district. Shops and other premises where meat and other foods are prepared or sold are the subject of the Sanitary Inspector's attention.

#### MEAT AND FOOD.

##### *Fruit and Vegetables.*

Apple Rings	..	..	..	4 lbs.
Apricots	..	..	..	3 lbs.
Figs	..	..	..	6 lbs.
Prunes	..	..	..	33 lbs.
Plums	..	..	..	12 lbs.

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58 lbs.

Carrots	..	..	..	26 lbs.
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##### *Meat and Other Foods.*

1 pair Ox Lungs	..	..	5 lbs.	} T.B.
1 Ox Liver	..	..	8 lbs.	
Meat	..	..	21 lbs.	Bone taint.

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34 lbs.

Ham	..	..	..	9 lbs.
Butter	..	..	..	9 lbs.
Cheese	..	..	..	7 lbs.

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25 lbs.

8 Packets Shredded Wheat.

3 lbs. Tea.

2 Gallons Oil Solvent.

900 Eggs.

##### *Fish.*

1 Box Hake	..	..	..	
1 Box Haddock	..	..	140 lbs.	
10 Boxes Smoked Fillet	..	..	28 lbs.	

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168 lbs.

##### *Tinned Food.*

18 Tins Beans in Tomatoes.

1 Tin Carrots.



6 Tins Canned Beef.  
 1 Tin Crayfish.  
 4 Tins Ham.  
 1 Tin Herrings.  
 88 Tins Milk.  
 24 Tins Pilchards.  
 13 Tins Peas.  
 16 Tins Salmon.  
 31 Tins Sardines.  
 25 Tins Soup.  
 12 Tins Tomatoes.

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246 Tins.

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Total weight of food surrendered .. 541 lbs.

#### BRITISH RESTAURANT.

It is a matter of regret that the Restaurant had to close. It has served the district well during a very difficult period, and its lack will be felt by its many patrons.

#### MILK (SPECIAL DESIGNATION) ORDERS.

Number of Producers of Tuberculin Tested Milk ..	—
Number of Accredited Licences .. ..	—
Number of Producers of Ordinary Milk .. ..	44
Number of Pasteurised Milk (Supplementary) ..	1

#### MILK AND DAIRIES.

Where producers are working on a small scale with limited stock, poor buildings and inadequate appliances, the quality of the product tends to be below average and this is noticeable in the District. It has to be admitted that landlords have been badly handicapped by building difficulties, but this has not been the sole cause of the lowering of quality. The Sanitary Inspector particularly stresses the need for the establishing of sound healthy stock, strict cleanliness around the dairy and cowshed, the keeping of the milk in cool dark premises, the exclusion of dust and flies and the delivery within twenty-four hours of production, especially in warm weather.

#### FACTORIES.

Attention has been paid to the health conditions in factories. In two cases only was it necessary to draw the owners' attention to the lack of efficient water closet accommodation.

## SECTION F.

### Prevalence of, and control over, Infectious and Allied Diseases.

The following table gives the number of cases of infectious diseases, together with the number of deaths from such :—

<i>Disease.</i>	<i>Cases notified.</i>		<i>Deaths.</i>
	1946	1945	
Scarlet Fever .. ..	1	4	—
Whooping Cough ..	25	5	—
Measles .. .. .	14	34	—
Pneumonia .. ..	3	—	—
Dysentery .. ..	—	1	—
Erysipelas .. ..	1	2	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	—	3	—

#### INCIDENCE OF DISEASE IN THE VARIOUS AGE GROUPS.

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Scarlet Fever.</i>		<i>Whooping Cough.</i>		<i>Measles.</i>	
	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>
0—	—	—	2	1	—	—
1—	—	—	5	5	—	2
3—	—	—	—	4	—	9
5—	—	1	1	7	3	—
10—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Totals</i>	—	1	8	17	3	11

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Pneumonia.</i>		<i>Erysipelas.</i>	
	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>
0—	—	—	—	—
5—	—	—	—	—
15—	2	—	—	1
45—	—	—	—	—
65—	1	—	—	—
<i>Totals</i>	3	—	—	1

## SCABIES.

There has been a gradual cessation of reports on this infection and the time has come when it would seem that the extra precautionary measure taken by the opening of the Centre at Newport will cease to be required. It is expected that this step of closure will be taken in the coming year, and such treatment as will be required will be in the nature of home service.

## DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

The Annual Return submitted to the Ministry of Health for the period ending December 31st, 1946, was as follows :—

	<i>Age under 5 years but over 1 year.</i>	<i>5 years and over but under 15 years.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Children immunised ..	67	6	73
Child Population ..	820	1410	2230
Percentage immunised	29.1	72.6	56.5

The clinical side of this work continues to be in the hands of the County Authority while records are maintained locally.

Considerable steps have been taken to close loopholes, and now a reasonable degree of follow-up of such cases as require treatment and control is established.

## TUBERCULOSIS.

The number of notified cases on the Register at December 31st, 1946, and the comparative figures for 1945 and 1944 are as follows :—

	<i>Males.</i>		<i>Females.</i>		<i>Total.</i>
	<i>Pulmonary</i>	<i>Non- Pulmonary</i>	<i>Pulmonary</i>	<i>Non- Pulmonary</i>	
1946	41	32	27	48	148
1945	37	33	26	45	141
1944	39	33	25	44	141

## NEW CASES.

*Pulmonary, 8.      Non-Pulmonary, 4.      Total, 12.*



## DEATH RATES.

	<i>Oakengates.</i>	<i>England and Wales.</i>
Death rate from Pulmonary Tuberculosis per 1,000 population ..	·093	·248
Death rate from Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis per 1,000 population	—	·080
Total death rate (all forms) .. ..	·093	·328

There was 1 death from Pulmonary and none from the Non-Pulmonary form of this disease.

## NEW CASES AND MORTALITY, 1946.

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>New Cases.</i>				<i>Deaths.</i>	
	<i>Respiratory.</i>		<i>Non-Respiratory.</i>		<i>Respiratory.</i>	
	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>
0-5	—	—	—	1	—	—
5-15	—	—	1	2	—	—
15-25	—	—	—	—	—	—
25-35	2	2	—	—	—	—
35-45	2	1	—	—	—	—
45-55	1	—	—	—	1	—
55-65	—	—	—	—	—	—
over 65	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	5	3	1	3	1	—

There was 1 Pulmonary and no Non-Pulmonary deaths.

## CANCER.

The number of deaths from Cancer in 1946 was 20 (of these, 11 were males and 9 were females).

	<i>Oakengates.</i>	<i>England and Wales.</i>
Death rate per 1,000,000 living ..	1,876	1,768

7th August, 1947.

W. A. M. STEWART,  
*Medical Officer of Health*









